

Side Sewer Program

A new addition to the
Wastewater Source Control Section

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Environmental Compliance Inspector

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From



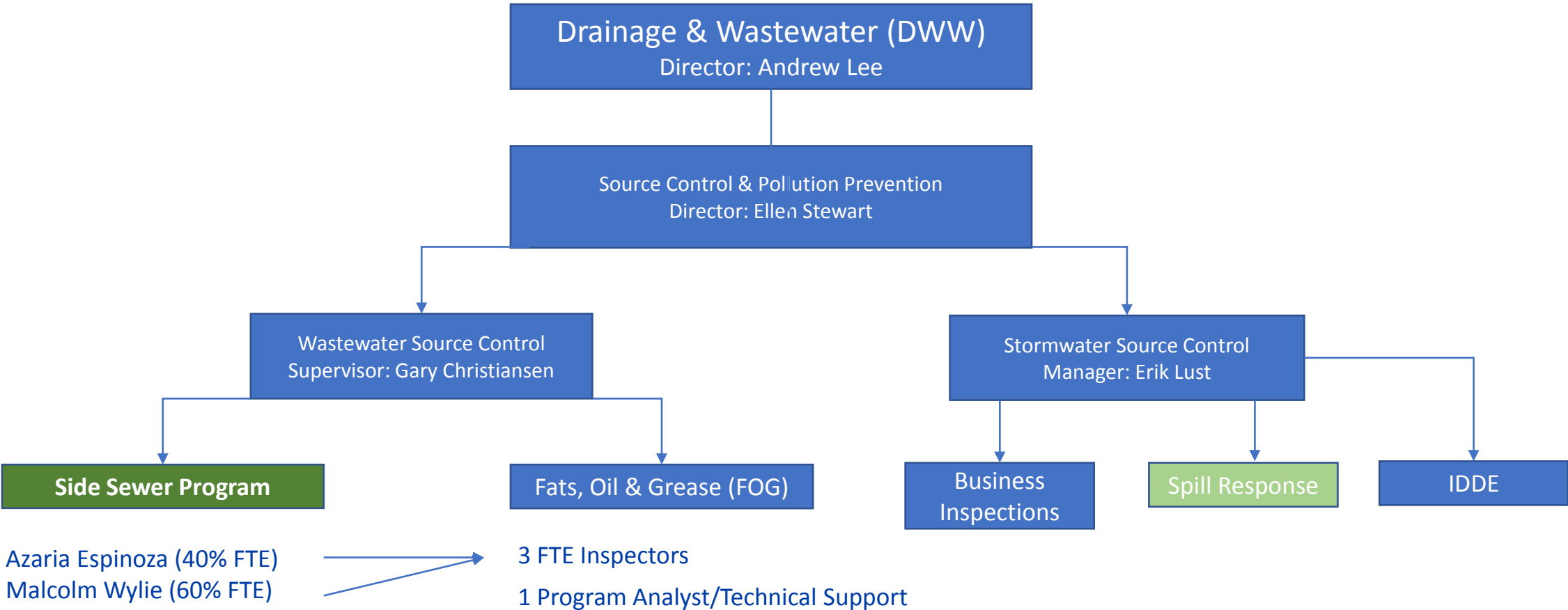
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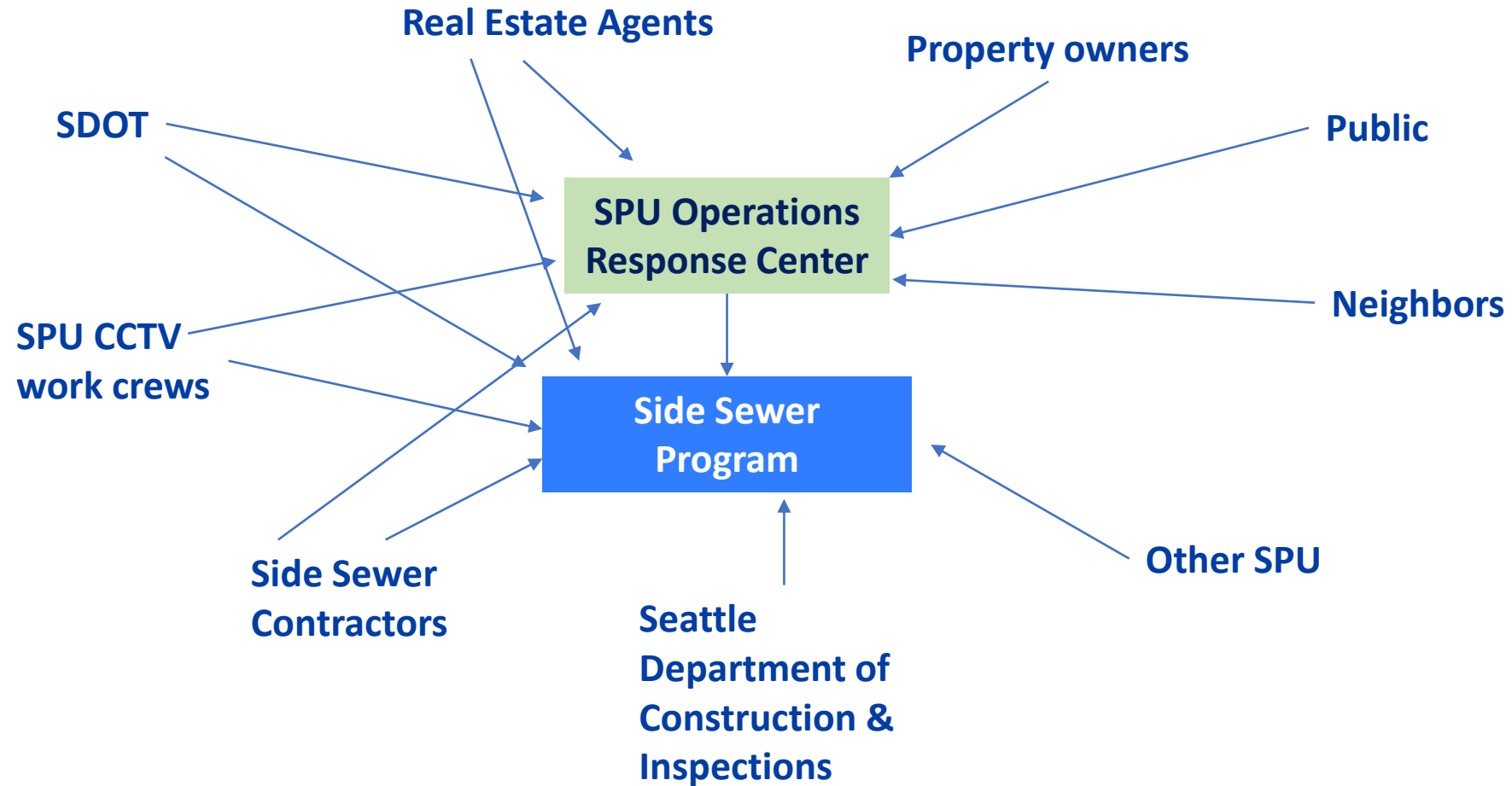
What I'm covering tonight...

- How the Side Sewer Program (SSP) fits into the Drainage and Wastewater (DWW) Line of Business
- What we do in the SSP
 - Types of Customer Inquiries
 - Side Sewer Code and Enforcement
 - Risk Assessment
 - Performance
- Affordability
- Side Sewer Program and Race and Social Justice

Where does the Side Sewer Program fit within DWW?



Where do most of our reports come from?



Types of requests

- 1st Connection Reviews
- Surfacing Sewage
- Voids (sinkholes)
- Backups
- Responsibility for tree roots
- Responsibility for shared side sewers
- Permit questions
- Location of private side sewer or sewer mainline



The regulatory basis for the Side Sewer Program

Enforcing the "Side Sewer Code" (Seattle Municipal Code 21:16)

21.16.180 - Repair of inoperative or inadequate side sewer or drainage system

Where it is determined by the Director of Health or the Director of Seattle Public Utilities that a side sewer or drainage system is obstructed, broken, inoperative, or inadequate and is a [menace to health, or is likely to cause damage to public or private property](#)



Enforcement Notices



File Number: 2019-SS-016
Date: April 2, 2019

SEATTLE PUBLIC UTILITIES
NOTICE OF VIOLATION
AND
ORDER FOR CORRECTIVE ACTION AND PENALTY

Name:
Address:



PENALTY:

Pursuant to SMC 21.16.362, a penalty of \$250 is hereby imposed to the property owner for the Code violation cited above. This penalty is suspended pending completion of the corrective action by the required deadline and will be waived if compliance is achieved by that deadline. However, if compliance is not achieved by the required deadline, this penalty will be due and payable upon invoice. In addition,

Public Health



Surfacing sewage cases where it is:

- In the public right-of-way
- On private property where it is coming from a neighboring property

We do not issue an enforcement notice where surfacing sewage is contained on private property, unless:

- It is a rental property
- It is an environmental risk

Environment



Surfacing sewage cases where it is, or likely to, enter a separated stormwater system or waterbody

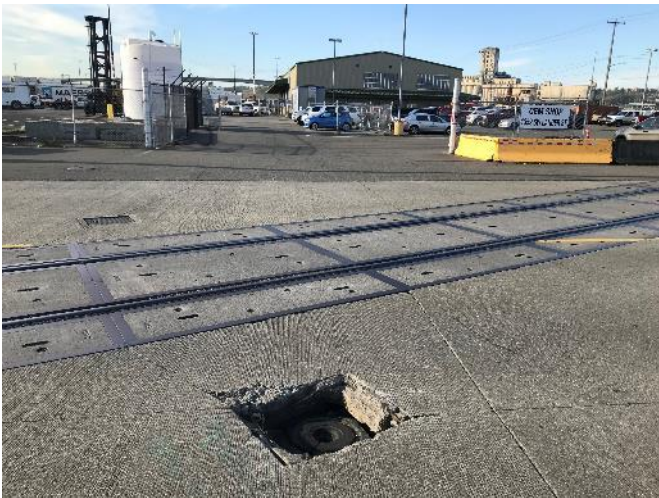
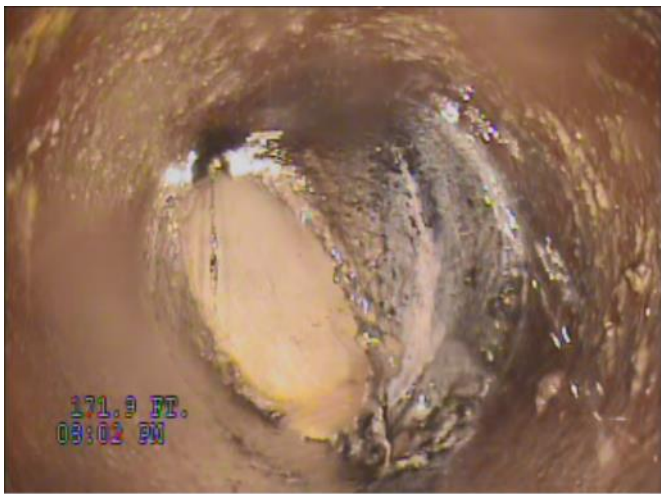
Note: SPU Spill Response is likely to be the first SCPP section to attend. They will do the regulatory reporting, water sampling, and posting of public notices if necessary.

City Assets



Voids or sinkholes are one of the most common types of case where we will issue a Notice of Violation. Note that the property owner is responsible for repairing their private side sewer and also responsible for street restoration

City Assets



Private Property



Where a broken private side sewer is allowing sewage to cross onto neighboring property

Our enforcement notices require owners to repair broken side sewers but not to clean up the contaminated ground on private property.

Situations where we do not issue enforcement notices

Defective side sewers not posing a risk to public health or the environment

- Backups into private property
- Obstructions in private side sewers
- Side sewers with an offset at the connection with sewer mainline where offset is $< 50\%$
- Drainage issues confined to private property



How many cases do we get?

345 TOTAL (2018)

42 Surfacing Sewage cases

48 Voids

140 1st Connection Reviews

27 Backups

17 Root Issues

49 Enforcement Notices (2018)

17 Surfacing Sewage

21 Voids

2 Protruding Liners

2 1st connections

7 Defective side sewers/discharge

How do we measure our performance?

The WSC section has established some metrics that we will use to assess the SSP program performance

90% of surfacing sewage cases have field investigation within 1 business day

90% of surfacing sewage cases have NOV issued within 3 business days

90% of surfacing sewage cases are resolved within 15 business days*

90% of non-urgent cases have field investigation within 5 business days

90% of non-urgent cases have NOV issued within 15 business days

90% of non-urgent cases are resolved within 60 business days**

90% of customer service requests are completed within 10 business days

*NOV's for surfacing sewage cases give the responsible party 14 days from the time of the incident being reported to have the issue resolved

**NOV's for cases such as voids, give the responsible party 30 days from the time of issuing the NOV to have the issue resolved

Areas where there has been an improvement

Communication with property owners in relation to responsibility, repairs, enforcement

Communication with property owners in relation to sharing information from CCTV inspections: offsets, roots

Communication with other sections of SPU – Operations Response Center, Pipe Assessment, Work Crews....

Ability to investigate complicated cases



Areas that we need to work on

Outreach material for Inspectors and work crews to leave at properties

Program specific information on website

Our timeframes for getting enforcement notices issued

More capacity for proactive notifications to owners

Affordability: Areas of Concern

Affordability for owners

Reactive program

Lack of awareness amongst property owners

Aging infrastructure

Home Repair

The Home Repair Loan Program provides affordable loans to income-qualified homeowners to address critical health, safety, and structural issues. The program is designed for owner-occupied, single family homes with low-to moderate-income households.

The no- and low-interest loans are funded by local and federal programs that prioritize repairs that address health and safety concerns. Homeowners are given as much flexibility as possible, and our trusted staff will offer expert guidance throughout the process to ensure the work is done well, and on budget.

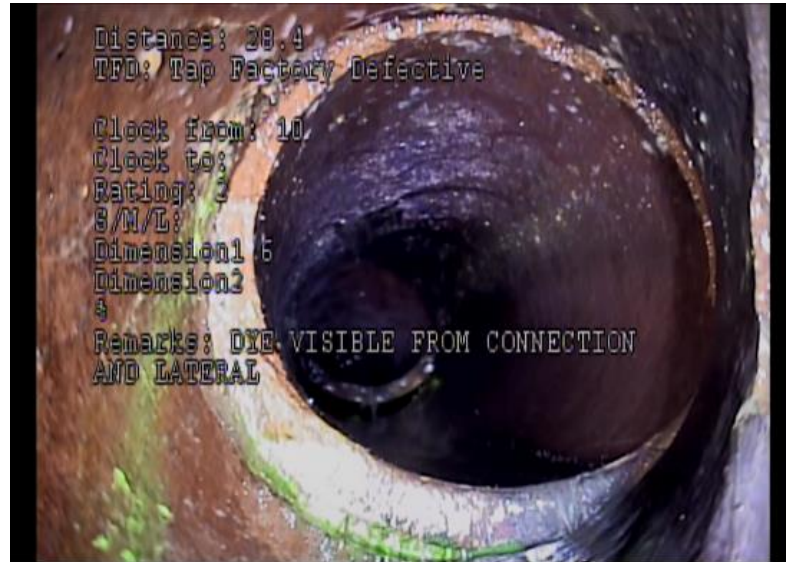
If you do not qualify for a loan, a Home Repair Grant may be available. Call us to learn more.

Home Repair Loan Program

To request a Home Repair Loan application, please call (206) 684-0458 or email HomeRepair@seattle.gov.



Affordability: Case Study 1



= \$100,000 repair

Owner had to have company pump out groundwater during repairs. Rip up new sidewalk

“Permits excessive”

Issues in the street have been ongoing – possibly more than just his side sewer

Affordability: Case Study 2



Affordability: Case Study 2



= \$60,000 repair. SPU replaced the connection. Costs were shared between SPU and owners upon claim.

Affordability: Case Study 3





Would it be
better to live
here...

....or here?

Affordability: Case Study 3



One owner has currently paid \$50,000 for the repair work. Street has yet to be restored as contractor pulled out of that work. SPU replaced the connection due to a defect after street had been opened up. SPU not responsible for street restoration. Street has had steel plates on it for over a year now.

How does this fit into the SPU focus on race, social justice and equity?

The SSP went through the SPU Racial Equity Toolkit process in 2018

Some of the following points or concerns were discussed:

Customers who live on arterials or bus routes will face a greater financial burden for repairs

Lower income customers tend to have less access to information – through internet or outreach

Less likely to get reports or complaints from lower income areas of the City

The SSP does not have a relationship with any community based organizations or neighborhood groups

Lower income customers less likely to respond to surveys

How does this fit into the SPU focus on race, social justice and equity?

Some of the following options or ideas were raised for further discussion or review:

Inequity in patch versus repair

Evaluating alternative models of side sewer ownership

Engaging in an awareness campaign

Inspect private side sewers during SPU and SDOT capital and repair projects

In summary...

So far,

The scope of the issues that the program encounters is much wider than assumed

Our main focus has been on developing procedures on how to respond to different types of side sewer issues

Our intent is for consistency, and to provide as much information to owners as possible

As we work to improve the program,

Every chance we get we are highlighting cases to management where the cost of repairs is proving prohibitive to owners

The SSP will be involved in developing an outreach strategy including development of materials that can be used

Questions or concerns?



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